



State Representative John J. Ryan

LOCAL ISSUES

Funding For Darien Housing Authority

I am pleased to be able to help secure a \$260,000 low interest loan from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) to benefit the Darien Housing Authority. The loan funds will be used toward renovations at the Allen-O'Neill Homes and Apartments on Noroton Avenue. As we know too well, our area of the State has serious needs for affordable housing and the Darien Housing Authority has been diligently working for many years to assist in this effort.

Funds For Local High School Program

I am also pleased to have been able to secure a \$13,000 arts grant from the state Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to benefit the Brian McMahon High School's drama club program. The high school serves students who live in Rowayton. The Drama Club at McMahon High School has achieved well-deserved and wide recognition for the excellence of its productions.

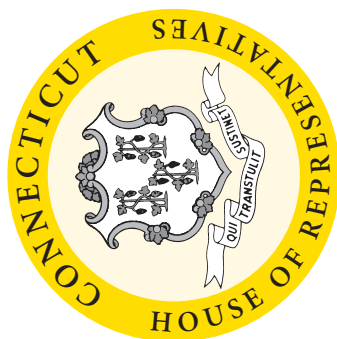
Legislation To Benefit Local Organization

At the request of the Piedmont Club, of Darien, I introduced Public Act 05-37, which allows social clubs in the state to conduct bazaars or raffles for fundraising purposes. The Piedmont Club uses its annual car raffle to raise a substantial portion of the club's operating expenses and this legislation will permit the raffle to continue under recent revisions to state regulations. It will not only benefit the Piedmont Club, but for many other clubs and organizations that do so much good work for charitable causes in our area.



Rep. Ryan confers with Rep. Lile Gibbons, R-Greenwich (left), Rep. John Hetherington, R-New Canaan (right), in the House Chamber during the 2005 Legislative Session.

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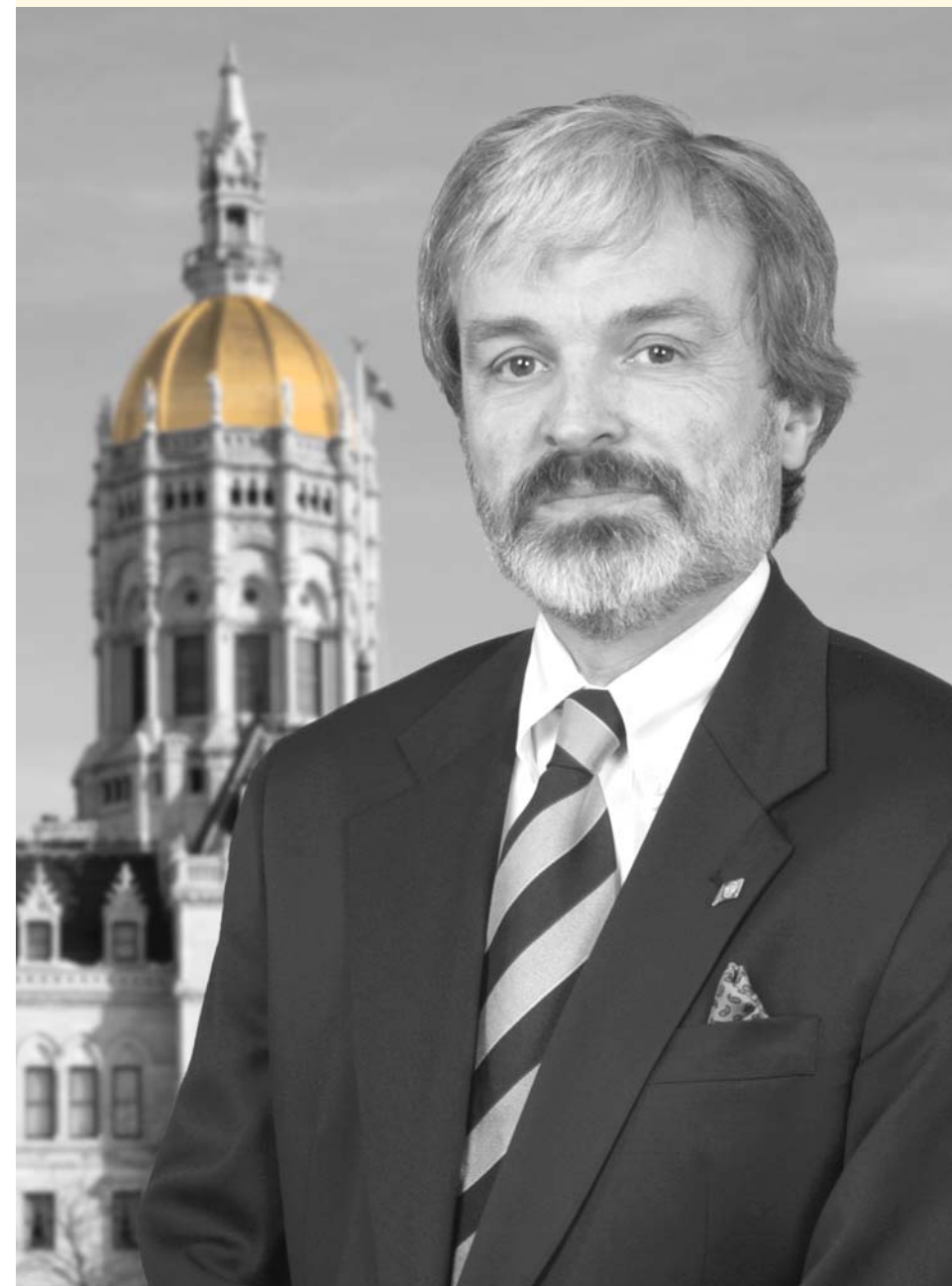
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2005 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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PUBLIC SAFETY

Cell Phone Ban

Public Act 05-159 bans the use of hand-held cell phones while driving. Effective October 1, 2005, the legislation prohibits drivers from using hand-held phones unless they are communicating an emergency situation to an emergency response operator, hospital, physician's office or health clinic, ambulance company, or fire or police department. Under the legislation, a first violation is punishable as an infraction with a fines of up to \$100.

Increased Penalties For Driving With A Suspended License, And Driving Under the Influence (DUI)

Public Act 05-215 establishes strict penalties for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended driver's license. Under the new legislation, anyone convicted of a second incident of driving with a suspended license will serve a mandatory 30 day jail sentence. The court can also impose additional penalties for repeated offenses. In addition, current law requires an administrative license suspension process for drivers who refuse to submit to a blood alcohol test or whose test results indicate an elevated BAC (.08% or more or .02% or more if the driver is under age 21). The new law doubles the license suspension periods if the offender is under age 21. This increase also applies to nonresident operating privileges.

Transportation Initiatives

The Governor's proposal to implement a \$1.3 billion comprehensive transportation restructuring for the State was approved by the legislature this year. This money is aimed at improving state highways and interstates, as well as upgrading public transportation. The funds will specifically replace the aging 342-car Metro-North commuter rail fleet, purchase more buses and eliminate numerous I-95 bottlenecks. New equipment for a modern, reliable rail alternative to clogged highways should be delivered starting in 2008.

Signal Preemption Devices

Public Act 05-242 addresses a relatively new problem involving signal preemption devices. These are devices capable of changing a traffic control signal and are primarily used by police, fire and ambulance vehicles, in order to expedite their route to an emergency. Unfortunately, they have also been purchased by non-emergency personnel. The potential for serious traffic accidents and ability to delay emergency vehicles from reaching their destinations is sufficient reason to restrict their use to police and emergency vehicles in Connecticut.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Coverage For Breast Cancer Screenings

Public Act 05-69 requires health insurance policies to offer ultrasound-screening options for women with a family history of breast cancer. In 1999, the Legislature mandated coverage for mammograms. Health authorities have noted that certain women can receive false negative results from a mammogram and, per their physician's orders, require additional testing for an accurate reading.

Patients' Rights

Public Act 05-128 requires hospitals to notify each patient in writing, upon the patient's admission, of his or her specific rights under the hospital's conditions of participation in Medicare. Notification must also inform the patient on how to file a complaint, including how to contact the Department of Public Health (DPH).

Cardiac Care

The General Assembly approved legislation requiring state agencies to review ways to use data collected at health care facilities to improve cardiac care. Public Act 05-167 requires the Quality of Care Advisory Committee, which advises the Department of Public Health on quality of care issues, to examine and evaluate

possible ways that the state's current data collection systems can be used to measure cardiac outcomes and the potential for statewide use of a cardiac outcome data collection system. The advisory committee must report its results and recommendations to the Legislature's Public Health Committee by December 1, 2007.

GOVERNMENT REFORM

New Ethics Board

In recent years, it had become clear that the existing configuration of the state Ethics Commission could not properly address alleged ethical misconduct by state officials. Public Act 05-183 abolishes the state's current nine-member State Ethics Commission (SEC) and establishes the Office of State Ethics (OSE) and a nine-member Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board as its successor. Establishing a completely new office, with better defined powers and structure, will help restore trust in state government.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Protection Against Identity Theft

Public Act 05-148 allows consumers to freeze their credit report and requires businesses to inform the affected consumers if there has been a security breach involving their computerized personal information. The law prohibits a credit rating agency from releasing a frozen credit report, or any information in it, without the consumer's express authorization. It authorizes most types of businesses to deem a credit application incomplete, and an insurer to deny an application, if it finds that a consumer's credit report is frozen.

Banning Expiration Dates on Gift Cards

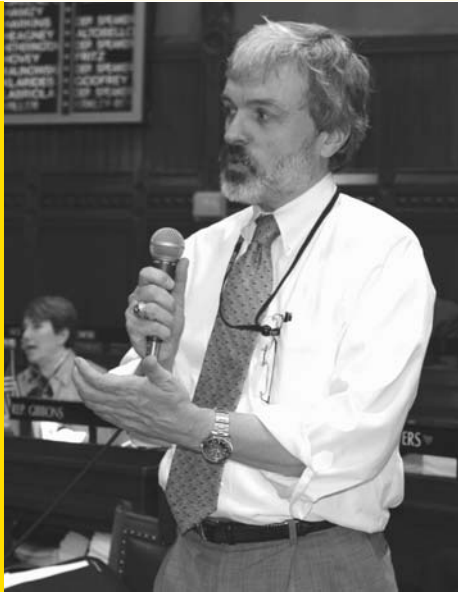
Previously, state laws had deemed most types of property held or owed by gift cards to be abandoned if the owner fails to claim it after three years. Public Act 05-189 postpones the date of abandonment from three to 50 years.

SENIORS

Study of Elderly Housing Complexes

Public Act 05-239 will address concerns about state-assisted elderly housing projects. It requires state social service agencies to assist local housing authorities to identify and access their services and several agencies to develop plans detailing their outreach efforts, available services, and crisis intervention activities. The act also requires a comprehensive assessment of rental assistance needs for state-assisted housing projects serving elderly and disabled residents.

Representative Ryan speaks on the Floor of the House during the 2005 Legislative Session.



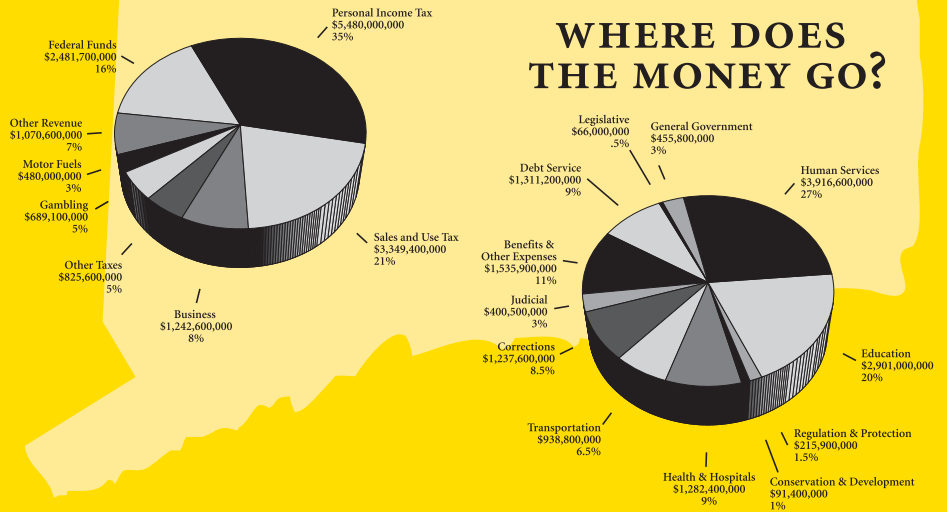
SPENDING AND TAXES

2005-2007 State Budget

While there were a number of good points in the 2005-2007 budget package that was approved this year, it also contained exorbitant spending increases (12 percent) and tax hikes (\$738 million). On a positive note, the Town of Darien will receive \$1,389,315 in municipal aid funds in Fiscal Year '06, an increase of \$56,176. The City of Norwalk will receive \$13,619,822 in municipal aid funds in FY 06, an increase of \$868,543.

BUDGET ENDING JUNE 30, 2005
THE 2005 GENERAL FUND AND
THE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION FUND
TOGETHER SPEND \$14.4 BILLION

WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?



*Revenues Exceeded Spending Leaving A General Fund Surplus of \$777 Million

CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS WORK 123 DAYS
OUT OF THE YEAR JUST TO PAY THEIR TAXES

Future CT Burden

Connecticut

National Avg.

Alaska



Jan. Feb. Mar. Apr. May. Jun. Jul.